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Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN:MAR
APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTONJR.
SY:VDIKEOS
NEA/ARN:MDRAPER
S/S: O - LRMACFARLANE
M/CT:DHECK (INFO)
S/PRS:HCARTER III (INFO)
----------162351Z 113225 /61
O 162322Z APR 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 086312

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

AGS: PLO, ASEC, LE

SUBJECT: MELOY AUTOMOBILE

REF: BEIRUT 1701
-
1. FOLLOWING ARE Q'S AND A'S SUPPLIED DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN FOR USE MONDAY ON IF-ASKED BASIS ABOUT THE RECOVERY OF THE MELOY AUTOMOBILE. POST CAN USE IF NECESSARY BEFORE THEN. PLEASE LET US KNOW ALSO IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS OR SUGGESTED CHANGES.

2. QUESTION: IS IT TRUE THAT THE CAR IN WHICH AMBASSADOR MELOY WAS DRIVING WHEN HE WAS ASSASSINATED HAS BEEN RECOVERED?
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ANSWER: -- YES, IT WAS RETURNED TO THE EMBASSY ON APRIL 14.

-- THE PALESTINIAN SECURITY OFFICIAL, WHO BELONGS TO THE FATAH FACTION OF THE PLO, WITH WHOM WE HAD BEEN IN CONTACT ON SECURITY-RELATED MATTERS IN THE PAST, TOOK THE INITIATIVE SOME DAYS AGO TO ARRANGE FOR THE EMBASSY TO TAKE POSSESSION

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OF THE VEHICLE.

-- THE VEHICLE IS NOW BEING EXAMINED.

-- IT APPEARS BASICALLY UNDAMAGED, AND WAS RETURNED UNDER ITS OWN POWER.

-- WE CONSIDER ITS RETURN, WITH OUR BEING ABLE TO EXAMINE THE CAR, HELPFUL TO THE INVESTIGATION OF THE MURDERS OF AMBASSADOR MELOY, COUNSELOR WARING, AND THE CHAUFFEUR MOGHRABI.

QUESTION: HOW IS ITS RETURN HELPFUL?

ANSWER: -- I AM NOT GOING INTO DETAILS OF AN INVESTIGATION WHICH IS STILL UNDERWAY.

QUESTION: WHAT HAVE YOU DONE UP TO NOW IN THE INVESTIGATION OF THE MURDERS BESIDES ASSURE US THAT EVERYTHING POSSIBLE IS BEING DONE?

ANSWER: -- FROM THE OUTSET, WE HAVE MADE AND CONTINUE TO MAKE STRONG EFFORTS TO UNCOVER ANY INFORMATION OR EVIDENCE THAT WOULD HELP US TO IDENTIFY THE ASSASSINS. WE HAVE MADE CLEAR WE WANT THOSE RESPONSIBLE PUNISHED.

-- IN RECENT TIMES THAT HAS INCLUDED PARTICULARLY CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES. IN EARLIER TIMES, BEFORE THE END OF THE FIGHTING IN BEIRUT (IN OCTOBER 1976), CONFIDENTIAL

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IT ALSO MEANT CONTACT WITH PLO SECURITY OFFICIALS.

-- THROUGHOUT, WE HAVE ALSO BEEN IN TOUCH WITH ALL QUARTERS AND GOVERNMENTS WHICH MIGHT ASSIST US IN OUR OBJECTIVES.

-- NOW THAT THE AUTOMOBILE HAS BEEN RECOVERED, WE ARE HOPEFUL THIS WILL MOVE THE INVESTIGATION FORWARD.

-- BEYOND THAT, I HAVE NOTHING FOR YOU.

QUESTION: WHAT ABOUT THE PRESS REPORTS SOME TIME AGO THAT THE FATAH HAD APPREHENDED THE THREE ASSASSINS?

ANSWER: -- WE HAVE SEEN THOSE REPORTS, BUT OUR INVESTIGATION CONTINUES. WE HAVE NOTHING FOR YOU ON THIS AT THIS TIME.

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-- WE WOULD WELCOME RECEIVING INFORMATION TO ADVANCE OUR OWN INVESTIGATION.

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QUESTION: IS THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT MAINTAINING CONTACTS WITH THE PLO ON THIS OR ANY OTHER MATTER IN LEBANON?

ANSWER: -- OUR POSITION ON POLITICAL CONTACTS WITH THE PLO IN LEBANON OR ANYWHERE ELSE IS AS PREVIOUSLY STATED -- WE HAVE NONE.

-- THE SECURITY CONTACTS WITH PLO FATAH OFFICIALS IN BEIRUT CEASED LAST OCTOBER, AS WE SAID AT THE TIME, WHEN THE ARAB SECURITY FORCE ENTERED BEIRUT.

-- THE CONTACT WITH OUR EMBASSY ABOUT THE CAR WAS THE FIRST SINCE THEN, AND DONE ON FATAH INITIATIVE. IT WAS STRICTLY ABOUT THIS MATTER.

-- AS TO THE FUTURE, WHERE THE MURDERS OF AMBASSADOR MELOY,
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COUNSELLOR WARING, AND CHAUFFEUR MOGHRABI ARE CONCERNED, WE ARE DETERMINED TO PURSUE ALL NECESSARY AVENUES TO SEE THAT THE ASSASSINS ARE IDENTIFIED AND PUNISHED.

-- IF THAT MEANS CONTACTS WITH THE PLO THROUGH THE PREVIOUS CHANNELS IN BEIRUT, WE WILL NOT HESITATE TO DO SO.

QUESTION: IS THIS THE FIRST TIME THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS HAD ACCESS TO THE CAR?

ANSWER: -- AT ONE JUNCTURE, LAST JULY, THE EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER IN CONTACT WITH THE FATAH WAS GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO INSPECT THE CAR.

-- BUT CONDITIONS IN BEIRUT DID NOT ALLOW US EITHER TO MAKE A COMPLETE EXAMINATION OR TAKE POSSESSION OF THE CAR.

QUESTION: DOES NOT THE PLO'S RETURN OF THE CAR SHOW PLO COMPLICITY IN THE MURDERS?

ANSWER: -- PLO IS AN UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION MADE UP OF MANY DIFFERENT ELEMENTS.

-- WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT FATAH, WITH WHOM WE HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT ON THIS MATTER, WAS INVOLVED IN THESE ASSASSINATIONS.

-- ONE OF THE PURPOSES OF OUR INVESTIGATION, OF COURSE, IS TO ESTABLISH WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE.
CHRISTOPHER

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Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2782201
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MELOY AUTOMOBILE
TAGS: ASEC, PINS, US, LE, PLO, (MELOY, FRANCIS E JR)
To: BEIRUT
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ebd2cba3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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